

What Are We Trying to Accomplish?

The mission statement of Leroy Chapel emphasizes seeing the work of transformation occur in people's lives *"through the Word of God"*. We want to see people shaped by the Word, delighting in the Word, and thinking Biblically so they can live obediently and joyfully to the glory of God. The teaching of the Scriptures occurs at various times in various ways at LCC. This paper aims to describe how we think about the teaching of the Bible so we can evaluate how we are doing and keep growing in the fulfillment of the mission of the Church.

A Word-Saturated Ministry

The Apostle Paul made every effort to establish local churches that were centered on the revelation of God to His people. He instructed Timothy and Titus to make the teaching of the Scriptures the foundation to Gospel ministry. He warned against false doctrine and speculative teaching that isn't based on the revealed truth of God (1 Tim 1:3). The overseers were to be men capable of teaching the Word (1 Tim 3:2). A good servant of God was described as one trained in the words of faith and of good doctrine over silly myths (1 Tim 4:6-7). Timothy was exhorted to command these things (1 Tim 4:11), and urge these things (1 Tim 6:2) in accordance with the sound words of Jesus Christ. Guarding the deposit entrusted to him through avoiding irreverent babble and the contradictions of false knowledge was essential (1 Tim 6:20). Why is all this focus put on the teaching and guarding of the Scriptures? Because *"All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness"* (2 Tim 3:16). The Scriptures are the inspired, authoritative, and inerrant Word of God for mankind. They are to be preached in season and out of season for the reproving, rebuking, and exhortation of God's people (2 Tim 4:2). At Leroy Chapel we take seriously these Biblical instructions regarding the teaching of the Bible and we aim to diligently, patiently, and lovingly minister truth through every area of our ministry.

What Does That Look Like?

The Bible is first and foremost the story of God's glory displayed in redemption. It is not a collection of principles to be used as the source for sermons. We don't treat it as a book of morality merely giving guidance for a better life. With humility we tremble at God's Word, for in it God is revealed (Isaiah 66:2). Therefore, any and every time we open the Scriptures we are teaching about God Himself. Every subject from sexuality to slander and from justice to jesting, if it is to be understood correctly, must be understood in its relationship to the Godhead. Any attempt to gain knowledge of self, or tools for better living, outside of knowing Christ will ultimately lead to folly and empty knowledge. Thus, our framework for teaching the Word of God includes the following three approaches:

Biblical Theology: The Whole Story of God's Redemptive Plan –

The whole Bible tells the story of God. From creation to the fall of man, and from the promise of salvation to the glorious resurrection of Jesus from the dead. From the beginning we progressively see the story of God's heart to redeem a people unto Himself unfold before our very eyes. At the first gospel promise of Genesis 3:15 and the missionary call to Abram of Genesis 12:1-3, the theme of God's story is getting glory for Himself through rescuing needy sinners. There are no human heroes in the Bible, just men and women in need of grace. As the story progresses we get more detail and fuller color as to who God is, how He works, and the nature of His relationship with

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those made in His image. The New Testament does not tell a different story; rather it is the fulfillment of all that was prophesied in the Old Testament. They are not separate treatises to be handled differently. In fact, it was the Old Testament that Jesus Himself used to tell His own story (Luke 24:25-27, 44-45). In all of our teaching we want people to understand how the Bible fits together as one story centered on the person of Jesus Christ and His glory!

Exposition: Texts in Their Original Context –

We teach texts in their contexts. No verse, paragraph, or chapter can be rightly understood outside of its connection to what goes before and comes after. Though different genres of Scripture need to be handled differently, every book in the Bible points people to the story of God redeeming fallen sinners through His Son Jesus Christ. Therefore, every Old Testament and New Testament book has value both for understanding truth and coming to love Jesus more and more. Expository preaching explains the words of passages as they fit to both the immediate context and the context of the whole story of God's glory. From Sunday sermons to midweek Bible studies, slowly working through books of the Bible is essential to our being fully equipped in the Word of God.

Systematic Theology: Clear Orthodox Doctrinal Categories –

We understand truth from what God has revealed in the Scriptures. First, as one story declaring the glory of God in redemption. Second, in various genres of literature understood in original contexts to the original hearers. Third, as a synthesized body of truth explaining essential subjects related to life and godliness. We understand this under the heading of Systematic Theology. There are central teachings to the Christian faith that must be understood properly to have a truly Biblical framework. Those teachings are connected to various passages of Scripture at different periods in Biblical history and delivered to various audiences. It is the responsibility of every Christian to have a firm grasp on the orthodox doctrines of the historic Christian faith as they have been developed, debated, and categorized for the sure footing of every child of God. These truths have been handed down through statements, creeds and catechisms for believers of all ages to commit to memory in order to embrace sound Bible doctrine and defend the faith against error. The church needs such clear and comprehensive doctrinal teaching so we build strong Christians who can stand firm in their faith.

Why Does This Matter?

So that every Christian *“has no need to be ashamed”*, and can *“rightly handle the word of truth”* (2 Tim 2:15). If the aim of the local church is to *“present everyone mature in Christ”* then *“Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom”* (Col 1:28). We believe that a healthy local church is dependent on growing disciples of Christ, and that central to their transformation is for those disciples to be rooted and grounded in the Word of God. Such grounding of disciples in the Scriptures requires the consistent implementation of the framework for teaching described in this document. Each of these three categories of a *“Word-Saturated Ministry”* establish an essential guardrail. Together they provide protection against imbalance, over-emphasis, or under-emphasis, each of which can lead to theological error and lop-sided disciples. For we know that *“knowledge puffs up, but love builds up”* (1 Cor 8:1). Therefore, we are careful to arm every believer with Biblical truth that promotes love and does not fuel arrogance. Like Paul, we believe that *“the aim of our charge is love that issues from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith”* (1 Tim 1:5). To this end we will constantly push for both greater integration and saturation of the ministry of the Word across every area of discipleship in every age group at LCC to the glory of God.